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Synopses of Important Articles.

THE SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT OF PAUL. By GEORGE E. BARTON,
in the *New World*, March, 1899, pp. 111-24.

1. Paul's conversion and its consequences to his thought. Paul a Jew did not distinguish between the moral and the ceremonial elements in the Jewish law. All law was given by God. Because Jesus was crucified Paul held he was cursed, and this curse was communicated to all of his disciples. This curse it was he attempted to stamp out. In his conversion he was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and that there was therefore a region in which divine favor was manifested and a divine sonship was enjoyed, even while a man was formally under the curse of the law. A Christian was, therefore, dead to the law, because his curse continued to rest upon him, while at the same time he lived unto God. The curse of the law rested also upon the Gentiles, but they too would be freed from the law, just as were the Jews. Such a view as this was the logical machinery by which Paul the Pharisee swept from his mind a Rabbinic philosophy. It bears about the same relations to the vital and permanent parts of Paul's system as a pioneer's ax bears to the rain and sunshine which produce harvest on the land the ax has cleared. Such a view is, therefore, not opposed to the more spiritual statement of thought which is set forth by Professor McGiffert.

2. Why the resurrection of Jesus convinced Paul of the divinity and the Messiahship of Jesus. The key of the problem appears in Luke 20:36, which has added to the triple tradition, "they are equal to angels, for they are sons of God, since they are sons of the resurrection." The Jews shared in the common notion that the dead lived in the underworld. They also believed that some persons could escape from the dead and be taken directly to the abode of God, like Elijah. This was interpreted to mean they became angelic members of the heavenly host (Ethiopic *Enoch*, 12:3, 4). Further, in Gen. 6:4 angels are called sons of God. Luke 20:36 means, therefore, that when the resurrection occurs, all who participate in it are heavenly beings. Thus it is easy to see how the experience on the way to Damascus convinced Paul that Jesus by his resurrection was a son of God. Therefore he must have been the Messiah, for he no more than Enoch could have been honored by escaping death if his mission and claims had

been false. Furthermore, from the current ideas of the Messiah, Paul would have attributed preëxistence to Jesus as Christ. This would make him very different from other sons of God.

Did this doctrine of sonship of Christ undergo any development in the mind of Paul? Certainly not before the time of his arrest and imprisonment, but in the other group of Paul's, to combat an incipient Gnosticism, Paul expressed more exalted views of the nature of Christ (Phil. 2:9; Col. 1:17; 2:9).

3. Paul's conception of the kingdom of God and of eschatology. His early views were occasioned by the Jewish system of thought. As time went on, his conception grew more spiritual, though the later Pauline eschatology is still connected with the Jewish. In the later Jewish Messianic code, under the influence of the Babylonian creation epic, the Messianic king assumed a new form. He was to be a king who should overcome all enemies. The earth would be destroyed, and a new earth and new life would come into being. Sheol would become simply a tarrying place, where the souls of the righteous awaited the revelation of the preëxistent Messiah, who would inaugurate a great period of strife, in which the wicked would be punished and the Messianic kingdom established. The early Christians and Paul did not abandon these apocalyptic hopes. Christ had ascended to take his place in this great world scheme. One day he would descend, and the struggles of Christians would be at an end, his enemies would be burned, a new earth would be inaugurated, and his kingdom would be established (*cf.* 1 Thess. 4:13-17). But in Cor. 12:23; 51:52 we have the beginning of a new stage in the Messiah code. It does not expect that the Messianic kingdom upon the earth will be permanent, but that the kingdom will exist only long enough to subject everything to God. The sleep in Sheol has been abandoned (1 Cor. 15:6-8). Along with this new phase came a more ethical conception of the kingdom of God (Rom. 14:17). In writing to the Philippians he speaks of death as no longer a falling asleep, but a translation of the soul to God. Thus he did not altogether abandon his early view of the actual return of Christ, but eliminated some of the crass features of the Jewish conceptions of the Messiah, and reached a view which was thoroughly ethical and spiritual.

This paper of Professor Barton's is exceedingly suggestive. It is, however, open to two criticisms: first, the time which could have elapsed, under any chronology, between Thessalonians and Galatians makes the question of development questionable; second, the argument from the resurrection of Jesus seems far-fetched in the

light of the report of Acts, in which the appeal is made to specific Old Testament passages.

S. M.

SOCIAL IDEAS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. By PROFESSOR WALTER RAUSCHENBUSCH, in *Treasury*, March, 1899.

I. The Mosaic law. (1) Land laws. All men were to start fairly equal. There was no provision for landed aristocracy (Numb. 26 : 53-55). Land was not to be sold outright (Lev. 25 : 23), because Jehovah was the real owner. In the year of jubilee land also reverted to the original owner, or his family. This, however, did not apply to town property (Lev. 25 : 13-16 ; 29 : 30). Every seventh year the land was not to be tilled, and the natural growth was common to all who needed it. These laws were, therefore, adapted to a stable rural population, but would not work in our shifting life. It is doubtful whether some of the provisions were ever put in practice, but they express the idea that the land is God's property—a principle that should be expressed in modern law.

(2) Labor laws. Every Hebrew was a freeman and a servant of God only (Lev. 25 : 42-55). If he sold himself into servitude, it could only be for six years. The year of jubilee freed all slaves. Domestic servants were protected and their condition made comfortable. They could not work on the sabbath, and they must be paid before nightfall (Deut. 24 : 14, 15). The poor could glean in the corners of the field. Interest was forbidden. This was meant to regulate friendly loans in distress. A pledge could be taken to secure the principal of a debt, but nothing necessary to life could be so taken, and there was to be no dunning in the sabbatical year (Deut. 24 : 6, 10-13 ; 15 : 1-3).

II. The poetic and Wisdom literature. In the Psalms the rich are usually wicked and the poor weak and godly. One of the most beautiful characteristics of the Old Testament conception of God is his care of the poor, especially the widow and orphan (Ps. 12 : 5 ; 9 : 18). In the Wisdom literature there is the desire to enjoy the golden mean property.

III. The preaching of the prophets. The prophets are not chiefly foretellers of future events, but preachers of divine righteousness to their contemporaries. They reserved their real wrath for injustice and covetousness. They laid the blame of social misery upon the better classes (Isa. 3 : 14-15 ; Amos 1 : 3, 4 ; Ezek. 34 and 45 : 8). They expect the day of the Lord in which social wrong was to be abolished (Isa. 61 : 1-3 ; Zach. 8 : 4). Such a new condition, however, will involve some suffering (Mal. 3 : 1-5). Their immediate demand is not for an increase of religiousness, but for a practical application of religion, a higher standard of morals (Isa. 58).